

Andrew Jackson to William John Duane, July 22, 1833, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO SECRETARY DUANE.

Washington, July 22, 1833.

My Dear sir, I cannot perceive the propriety of the concluding paragraph in the draft of instructions proposed to the agent of inquiry,¹ which you have submitted to me this morning, unless you are determined not to acquiesce in the decision which the President, on advisement with his cabinet, may make, after a full view of all the circumstances of the case. You may not be aware that such is the construction which the paragraph authorises; and that it is manifestly at variance with the views which render the inquiry expedient.

¹ Amos Kendall.

The great object to be attained by the inquiry is to ascertain whether the State Banks will agree to become the agent of the Government on the terms proposed, for the safe keeping and transmission of the public monies. If they will, the ground taken by the President, should circumstances remain as they now are, is, that it will be then expedient and just, to resort to them as a substitute for the Bank of the U States, as a fiscal agent. But lest in the course of inquiry something might arise which would justify a different conclusion, it was deemed best by us at our last interview that there should be no commitment *beyond the inquiry* at this time, as to the action of the Government in regard to the change of deposits; and that on the latter point a decision should be postponed until the report of the agent should be received, when there would be a full consideration of the conduct of the Bank and all the matters connected with the substitution of another fiscal agent.

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Previously to inquiry however, you declare that nothing has yet occur'd to render necessary the movement anticipated by it, and thus lead me to infer that should the inquiry establish the competency of the State Banks to perform the agency proposed to them, you will not feel yourself at liberty to carry into effect the decision (transferring the public deposits to them) which the President on advisement with his cabinet may make. Please inform me whether I am correct in supposing that this is your determination. If I am, it will then become my duty in frankness and candor to suggest to you the course which will be necessary on my part.

I am very respectfully your obt. srvt